

# rhythms of the **African World**

**Detroit brings out the best of art, music, clothing and food to celebrate cultures**

By Rhonda Bates-Rudd | The Detroit News

**T**astes from Nigeria, sights from Senegal and sounds from Jamaica. Tuesday all be on display this weekend when more than 50,000 people converge on downtown Hart Plaza for the 10th annual African World Festival, hosted by the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History.

"See the festival as a continuation of the foundation the museum has built in terms of educating the community about the African Diaspora and if gives us an chance to expose more people to what's going on outside of the U.S.," said Ernest Duncan, the museum's interim director. Duncan, who said the popularity of the three-day celebration of African culture and influence continues to grow across the nation, has been flooded with out-of-state inquiries about the festivities and event scheduling.

In a city of about 4 million people, without less than 25 percent of them African American, the festival's organizers say they may not be bringing in many non-Americans. But Duncan said there's more to it than that.

"I think the entertainment is a big draw for us, because we bring in African, Caribbean and Latin artists," Duncan said. That is reflected in the official title of the event — officially called Rhythms of the African Diaspora Culture, Spirit and Creativity. Some 150 vendors will offer authentic African artifacts, jewelry and other artifacts.

Sponsored by

Ford Motor Co., DaimlerChrysler AG and General Motors Corp., the festival opens at 1 p.m. Friday and runs through Sunday, closing with a concert featuring Detroit native and jazz-artist Donald Byrd.

Byrd, performing in Detroit for the first time in 25 years, will highlight of what vendors and organizers say will be the best festival ever, offering a mix of local, national and international entertainment appealing to all age groups.

While the festival is recognized as one of Detroit's largest annual events, native African vendors say their families and friends look forward to attending and see it as an added value, opting to vacation in Motor City during the festival weekend.

Seneca native Annadou Sow, who has been a festival vendor for the past two years, will be selling a mix of imports, along with his original wood carvings, brass works and hand bags. "The wood carvings are a tradition in my family; my father taught me, my sister, and I. Another brother learned how to carve wood at a very young age," Sow said.

The festival for me is significant in Detroit because it brings Africans and African Americans together.

"That is why so many people travel from Africa every year to attend this event," he said.

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## If you go

**Where:** 10th Annual African World Festival at Hart Plaza, at the foot of Woodward in downtown Detroit. **When:** 5-10 p.m. Friday, noon to 11:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

**Phyllis Barah Sanchez** has been serving up her native African Soul Food since the festival's inception many years ago. She said she will serve 500 pounds of rice per day with her authentic cuisine.

It was Phyllis Sanchez and other native Africans who convinced festival organizers to broaden the festival scope from African-American to African nations.

"Today, she said, "this festival is really something to brag about." "Detroit has the best African World Festival in America, because they bring in the entertainers who truly represent our culture."

"The Festival is important for that reason alone," she said.

Nigerian native

The 10th annual African Wo

festivals since it began, says:

"Ians use salt pork," she said. "This year the woman known as African greens will feature sava leaves, a green from the plant, which is one of the most popular meat used in cooking by our nationalities throughout world, particularly African Americans."

Lisa Lewis said she is still repaying benefits from her vending booth last year and returns this year to sell fabrics. Lewis is a name in textile which originated in India and exhibits throughout the world, particularly African Americans.

"Detroit African Americans," Lewis said, "are still repaying conveniences and special events like the seeds I planted at the festival last year, are still sprouting." "The Badu is a sartorially worn with beach wear, encourage my customers to come year-round, as well as encourage them to find different uses for them, such as table cloths and curtains, as the festival has infinite variety of ethnic items, as well as a variety of ethnic items, as well as a season similar to the way Amer-



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## The Annual African World Festival

### Events Schedule

#### Mobile / Umola Stage

**Friday**

5:00-5:30 p.m.: Opening ceremony  
5:30-6:30 p.m.: Umar Santos procession and performance  
6:30-7:00 p.m.: IZA, Eugene Desouze (Hughie) Feat. Afro Pen

7:00-7:15 p.m.: Biggie Iris, Auto Tapin, David Kirton

8:30-8:45 p.m.: Red Fox, Raven

8:30-10:00 p.m.: Max Priest;

10:30-11:15 p.m.: Krosiyah



the Diaspora featuring the bogei, whip wop, reggae.

Cafe Diaspora

Saturday

7 p.m.: Soul Clique and Third Stone from the Sun

Sunday

7 p.m.: Soul Clique and Third Stone from the Sun

Ulfuna Stage

Saturday and Sunday

Ogun An Urban Monument Kraib



Githi Spirit Artists Collective

noon-3:00 p.m.: Poets, musicians and

dances

1:00-4:00 p.m. and 6:00-10:00 p.m.: by appointment only, video taping of interviews with African American Auto industry workers

Kudzu Grove Spirit Artists Collective

Series II: Collaboration in the Arts/Millennium

Satellite: The Relationship of the Arts & Community

Series III: Oyaji: An Urban Monument dedicated to the spirit of the African American Auto Industrial Workers

Family Village

Friday

5:00-8:00 p.m.: Detroit Tigers Pitching Booth

5:00-7:00 p.m.: African Dance Performance and Instruction and Poetic Expressions-Open Mic Poetry

Arts & Crafts Tent

Saturday

5:00-8:00 p.m.: Face Painting

7:00-9:00 p.m.: Murakid Project

Sunday

noon-1:30 p.m.: Lectures/Demonstrations

3:00-3:45 p.m.: Live Latin Music

3:45-4:30 p.m.: Dances of the Diaspora featuring the bop, hustle and the step

Saturday

3:00-3:45 p.m.: Stories/Taps (dancers)

Sunday

3:00-3:45 p.m.: Bohemian Dance Lessons

Sunday

2:00-4:00 p.m.: June Santos Demonstration

4:00-4:45 p.m.: Martial Arts

Sunday

5:00-5:45 p.m.: Dances of

the Diaspora featuring

African Music-Drumming

5:45-6:30 p.m.: African Dance/Salsa

7:00-7:45 p.m.: Universal Expression Pegeue

7:45-8:30 p.m.: Danzas of

Macabiles

3:00-5:30 p.m.: Paper Masks

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